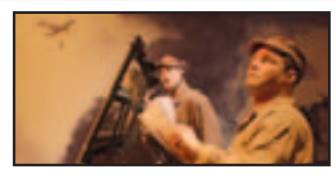

Warfighting
A-3

Museum
B-1

Swamp Romp
C-1

Echo Company patrols Karma streets

Cpl. Chadwick deBree
1st Marine Division

KARMA, Iraq — The Island Warriors made a significant transition this month, leaving Hawaii and arriving in al Anbar province.

Already, the Marines and Sailors of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, are patrolling the streets here.

For the past couple weeks, Marines like Lance Cpl. Matthew Lembke, squad leader, 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Echo Company, 2/3, have studied the area, taking notes on places and things throughout the city. He mentioned how he and others want to get out and learn as much as possible, and be able to introduce themselves to the locals.

During one of the Marines' rou-

tine patrols Feb. 21, they started off with a visit to a local brick factory where the workers welcomed the Marines with handshakes and smiles.

"When I was talking to the manager he told me that he likes it when the Marines come through because he knows that they are safe when we're there," Lembke, a 21-year-old native of Tualatin, Ore., said. "So I

told him that we're going to make sure that we stop by often just to see how they're doing and if they need anything that we could help them with."

The Marines then headed to the local school to find out when it opened for its next semester. When they got there, one of the teachers gave them a tour of the school to show the Marines the

building's condition.

"The school had a lot of structural damage to it," Lembke said. "There were big cracks along the walls and they said they can't fix it because they don't have any money. I'm going to bring it up to see if I could get some help for them. See what our company or battalion

See STREETS, A-6



Lieutenant j.g. Daniel Cuellar, co-pilot, Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 37, smiles at his wife as she welcomes him home from his six-month deployment.

HSL-37 Det 2 returns from OEF

Lt. j.g. Shaun Turner
HSL-37

The EasyRiders completed their tour in the Philippines supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, and returned here Feb. 22 after spending roughly six months abroad with the USS Reuben James.

Detachment 2 (the Body Snatchers), Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron Light 37, departed Naval Station Pearl Harbor in late August to operate in the Western Pacific and South China Sea, working for Joint Task Force 515 and Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines.

The detachment maintained and operated a single SH-60B Seahawk multi-mission helicopter, EasyRider 50 - aptly dubbed "Hawaii Five-O".

The deployment offered a full spectrum of operational activity, as Det. 2 flew missions including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; intelligence preparation of the battlefield; logistics support; passenger transfers; vertical replenishment; and naval special warfare support. The EasyRiders also executed a search

and rescue mission and a medical evacuation from USNS Niagara Falls to Zamboanga, Mindanao. The SAR and MEDEVAC were some of the most rewarding missions for the crew, as they provided opportunities to help fellow Americans in need in a forward-deployed environment.

While supporting OEF-P, the EasyRiders enjoyed unusually exotic port visits: Tuvalu, Saipan, Kota Kinabalu, Dumaguete, Tacloban, Singapore, Penang, Guadalcanal, Tonga and American Samoa. The visits provided the crew many opportunities to participate in community relations projects, such as Project Handclasp, to help people improve quality of life abroad. The visits also gave young Sailors a chance to exercise ambassadorship roles throughout the region.

The unit visited Penang, Malaysia, after which the Reuben James returned to the Philippines to finish her mission in the joint operating area. Before heading home, Det. 2 conducted valuable inter-squadron training, improving unit mission

See RETURN, A-6

Family, friends welcome 3/3 Marines back to K-Bay

Lance Cpl. Alesha R. Guard
Combat Correspondent

America's Battalion began their rotation out of al Anbar, Iraq, starting Feb. 7, and will continue throughout February.

Family and friends welcomed home 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, from their seven-month Iraq deployment with teary eyes and open arms at ceremonies in Hanger 101 and Building 107 throughout February.

"Our Marines performed very well, and we had an overall successful deployment," said Maj. Michel Monbouquette, executive officer, 3/3.

The Marines accomplished their mission of helping rebuild Iraqi cities and government, Monbouquette said.

"Our Marines are putting Iraqi children back in school, ridding cities of insurgents and training the Iraqis to provide security for themselves," Monbouquette said.

The roaring crowds at each homecoming proved that the returning heroes were very much missed while they were gone. American flags and homemade posters waived in the air at each landing of the returning planes. The U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific Band serenaded the humble warriors as they walked down the red carpet toward the



Major General Robert Schmidle walks with his son, 2nd Lt. Christian Schmidle, platoon commander, India Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, during a homecoming ceremony here Thursday at Hanger 101. The battalion returned home from a seven-month deployment to Iraq.

cheers of proud loved ones.

"We hope to make each Marine feel a well-deserved welcome home," said Staff Sgt. Jody Stroud, family liaison officer, 3/3.

Stroud said each homecoming is a

chance to thank the returning Marines for the sacrifices they made.

"The ceremony was really nice to come home to," said Lance Cpl. Mike

See WELCOME, A-6

Gates tours Pearl Harbor backup ship for satellite shot

Fred W. Baker III
American Forces Press Service

U.S. NAVAL STATION PEARL HARBOR — Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates Feb. 21 toured the USS Russell, one of the three ships used for the Feb. 20 shooting of the dying reconnaissance satellite orbiting Earth.

The ship's homeport is here, and ship officials said the crew went through the same drills as the USS Lake Erie, which fired the actual shot that hit the satellite. The Russell did not, however, load a missile or leave the port, the officials said.

Gates viewed some of the drills the crew went through to prepare for the shooting, he said, talking to the press shortly after the tour.

"(It is) Just another reminder, as with other ships I've visited, (of) ... the incredible quality and dedication and skill of the men and women in uniform that carry out these tasks," Gates said.

The secretary thanked the people of Hawaii for their support to local servicemembers and their families. "Without your help and support, everything would be a lot more difficult for them. So we really appreciate the local support," Gates said.

The secretary also commended defense and Navy officials for the successful shootdown. "Finally I would just like to congratulate (Air Force) General (Kevin) Chilton and those in strategic command, as well as the Navy for what appears to be a very successful operation yesterday," Gates said. Chilton is commander of U.S. Strategic Command.

The secretary also toured the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, which is responsible for searching for, recovering and identifying remains of Americans unaccounted for from all conflicts from World War II through the Persian Gulf War.

The secretary left here today for Australia, after a brief visit with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the commander of U.S. Pacific Command last evening. The secretary dined with Navy Adms. Mike Mullen and Timothy J. Keating, the Joint Chiefs chairman and PACOM commander respectively, after arriving from Washington yesterday.

Australia is the second stop in a nine-day tour that includes Indonesia, India and Turkey.



Navy Lieutenant Courtney Minetree gives Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates a tour of the engineering spaces aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Russell.

— NEWS BRIEFS —

HPV Vaccinations

The Naval Clinic Hawaii is informing parents of 11 to 12-year-old girls about the opportunity to prevent serious disease in their children. The Human Papillomavirus preventive vaccination can protect females against four different types of HPV, which could subsequently protect them from genital warts and/or cervical cancer.

The vaccine is readily available and recommended for females between 9 and 26. However, the group most likely to benefit is girls between 11 and 12.

To have your child vaccinated, visit the Naval Health Clinic Hawaii Immunization Department at the Makalapa or Kaneohe Bay Branch Clinics during normal hours and request the vaccine series.

Call the clinic here at 257-3365 ext. 103 for more information.

2008 Newman’s Own Awards

Volunteer and nonprofit organizations with military quality of life programs are eligible to submit proposals for grants through the Newman’s Own Awards program. Organizations submit proposals to Fisher House Foundation by May 2, and judges evaluate each proposal to distribute grants totaling \$75,000.

For more information, call (888) 294-8560 or visit <http://www.fisherhouse.org>.

Spouses Learning Series Conference

Marine Corps Family Team Building is holding their annual conference March 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Officers’ Club. “Champion Heart: New Strength for your Military Life” is a day to focus on developing the signature strengths of your family.

There will be light refreshments and reimbursement for childcare. The event is open to all active duty spouses – call your family readiness officer to sign up no later than Feb. 28.

For more information, call Jocelyn Pratt at 254-2410.

Military Saves Week

Personal financial readiness can affect military readiness by reducing stress that can distract service members from their mission. Military Saves Week addresses this issue. Leaders at all levels can support their Marines and families by fostering a culture that encourages them to save and build wealth. Commanders at all levels should engage their Marines regarding savings programs by actively promoting Military Saves Week.

Tax Center

The Marine Corps Base Hawaii Tax Center is open. It is located in Building 279 on the second deck. The hours for the Tax Center are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday.

Important Phone Numbers:

On-Base Emergencies	911
Military Police	257-7114
Child Protective Service	832-5300
Fraud, Waste, Abuse & EEO	257-8852
Business Management Hotline	257-3188
Pothole & Streetlight Repair	257-2380
Base Information	449-7110
MCBH Duty Chaplain	257-7700
DEERS	257-2077

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Combat Correspondent	Lance Cpl. Ronald W. Stauffer
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Combat Correspondent	Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantariotis

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FAX: 257-2511, PHONE: 257-8836**

Professional education comes first



Gunnery Sgt. Steven M. Burkett
Contributing Writer

(Editor’s note: The following is a rebuttal to last week’s commentary “Why Wait? Sergeant speaks on importance of starting college while in Corps.” After reading the article, written by Sgt. Macario P. Mora Jr., Gunnery

Sgt. Steven M. Burkett felt compelled to respond. The editorial staff welcomes any feedback by readers on any stories or commentaries published in the Hawaii Marine. It’s your paper too.)

Sergeant Mora’s article titled “Why wait?” misses the mark in more than one regard. The article is difficult to read due to the holier-than-thou attitude he presents and his misguided opinion as to why Marines do not go to college while in the Corps.

I took extreme offense to one particular passage, “If your goal in life is to struggle through your one enlistment, get out and flip burgers to support your eventual wife and five kids then read no further.”

The only conclusion one could achieve by reading that statement is Sgt. Mora believes if you don’t go to college while

on active duty, you are sure to be a substandard Marine, attain a low entry-level position upon leaving the Corps, and that being married with five children is a horrible fate.

If the sergeant would lower himself from his perch for a moment, he would realize that as a noncommissioned officer, his ill-advised commentary toward a large segment of the Corps does not reflect highly on himself or his leadership qualities.

I was in the Marine Corps 12 years before I decided to pursue off-duty education. At no time did I consider myself a second-rate Marine - as the article portrayed leathernecks who do not go to college.

Sometimes Marines want to go to college but are hesitant since they have not been in a school environment for several years. What these Marines could use is a seasoned NCO,

who obviously has experience in this arena, to give them tips to increase their confidence in taking the first step, vice an article where the author spends half the space patting himself on the back and the rest deriding anyone who does not follow his path.

I realize the author stated he has six years in the Marines and is by no means a salty dog in age or experience. I will try to impart a little knowledge and understanding. Marines do not put down other Marines for making decisions that are different from what you believe is the best course. You guide them and let them know you care about them.

Sergeant Mora did get one thing correct in his article when he stated that required primary military education should always be a Marine’s first course of action. I suggest “Leading Marines.”

Lesson learned inside, outside classroom

Lance Cpl. Regina A. Ruisi
Combat Correspondent

When I left the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md., the first time, it was after a nine-month stint of military occupational school. Given, public affairs MOS school may not be the School of Infantry or anything, but still, being in a training environment for that long is enough to drive any Marine up a wall.

After two classes making me a public affairs specialist in the form of a combat correspondent and broadcast journalist, I was happy to see the best view of DINFOS was, in fact, through the rear-view mirror.

When my gunny here asked me what class I wanted to take at DINFOS, I was floored. I was in the fleet for nine months and they expected me to go back? I was expected to spend an entire year out of my first two years at MOS school? You must be kidding me! So I looked at what classes I could take and signed up for the Digital Multimedia Course. It sounded important. Basically, I was to learn all sorts of computer programs I’d probably never use in my actual MOS.

So I took Christmas leave and ended it back at DINFOS. It was with a reluctant smile I greeted

the senior enlisted advisor of the Marine Detachment, Fort Meade, as he asked me “back already?” and commented on my haircut. I actually caught him right after a nice 8-mile run with the post-combat-training Marines ... it was Saturday morning. That, of course, made me even more disappointed to be back.

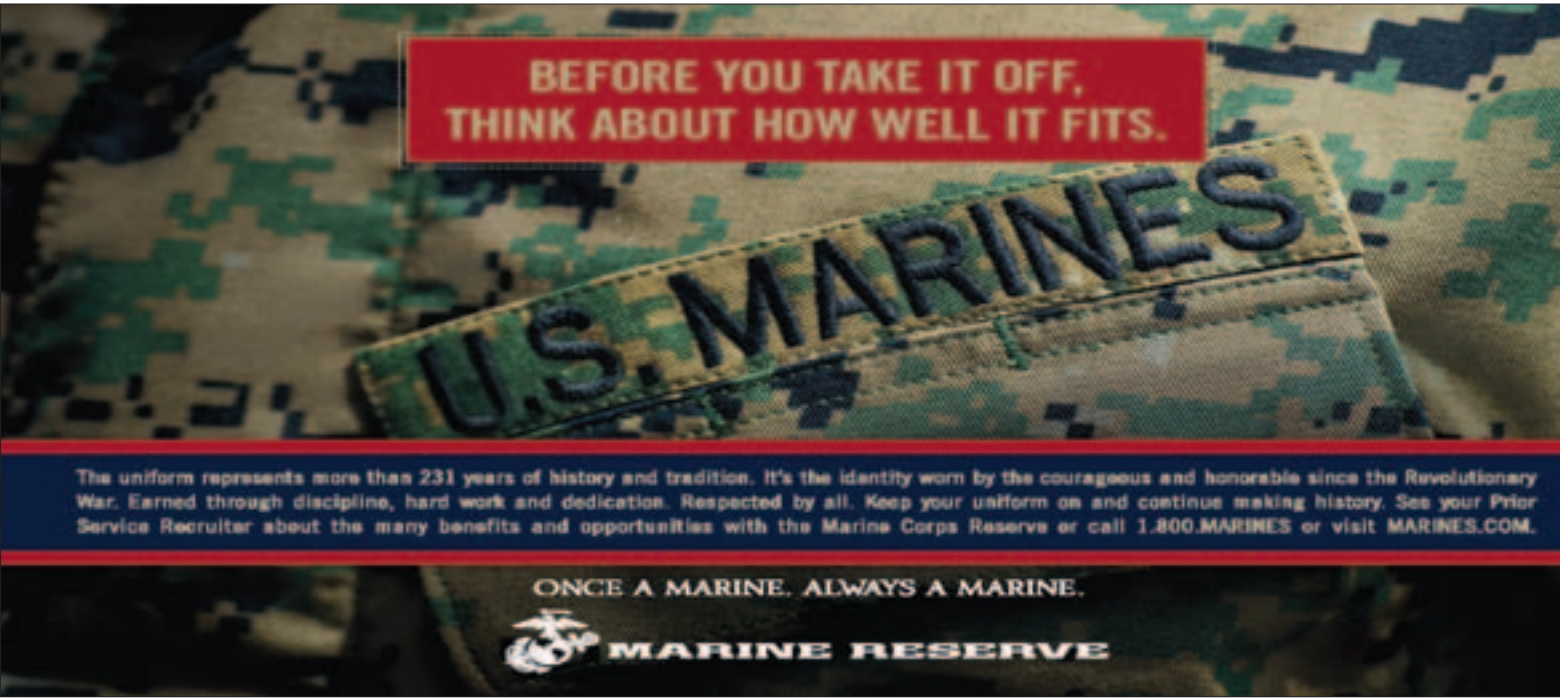
Soon enough my class started and I was overwhelmed with programs I’d never touched, some I had never even heard of. The schedule looked intense. How was I going to learn to be proficient in seven programs in seven weeks? That and the twice-a-day physical training sessions, and by 8 p.m. I was asleep. I remember thinking “there is no way I’ll be able to do this. There is no way I’m going to pass this class, manage to handle the PT schedule and be a good example to the hundred or so Marines in the detachment.”

I underestimated myself.

By the end of the seven-week course, if they hadn’t made me

return here, I would’ve immediately signed up for another one. The knowledge I gained not only in my occupational field (I’m actually ahead of everyone else ... I know the future of where public affairs is going now!), but learned a lot from the other “fleet returnees” and, quite surprisingly, the young Marines.

The other fleet returnees taught me a lot about my job, some using their deployment knowledge to give me an idea of what that would be like, some bringing with them different views of the same field, some even motivating me with a daily (or an every-five-minute) “oorah!” I even learned the intimate details of “a day in the life of...” a stinger gunner, artillery mechanic and what it’s like to work in the wing. They showed me Marines, regardless of pre-existing relationships, duty station or similar career backgrounds, can and will be a support net for each other when dealing with a com-



Weekend weather outlook

Today	Saturday	Sunday
Day — Isolated showers. Partly cloudy, with a high near 81. East wind between 13 and 15 mph, with gusts as high as 18 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.	Day — Isolated showers after noon. Partly cloudy, with a high near 79. South wind around 6 mph. Chance of precipitation is 20 percent.	Day — A 20 percent chance of showers. Partly cloudy, with a high near 79. East wind around 7 mph.
Night — Mostly clear, with a low around 66. West wind around 7 mph.	Night — Mostly clear, with a low around 68. Calm wind.	Night — Mostly clear, with a low around 68. South wind around 7 mph.
High — 81	High — 79	High — 79
Low — 66	Low — 68	Low — 68
Weekend weather outlook provided by http://www.noaa.gov		



Marines attending Corporals Course 4-08 practice engaging threats by fire and maneuver during one of their patrols by Landing Zone Boondocker, Tuesday.



A mock improvised explosive device used to instruct Marines is hidden in grass during the Marine's final exercise training near Landing Zone Boondocker.

Corporals Course

Warfighter package teaches practical Warrior application

Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis
Combat Correspondent

Corporals Course 4-08 concluded its roughly four week program this week with its “Warfighter Package,” the final exercise testing Marines’ basic knowledge with simulation drills, patrols, and offensive and defensive tactics.

The last days are primarily for practical application and to make for a smooth transition from the classroom to reality, said Staff Sgt. Jorge Baez-Colon, instructor, Staff Noncommissioned Officers Academy.

“The mission is to get them to know more of the warfighting – get them familiar with the typical kind of warfare they’ll encounter,” Baez-Colon said. “How to react to certain situations and how to maneuver are some of the things we emphasize. Not a lot of them are from the [infantry] military occupational specialty, so we train them to get ready in case they need to lead their Marines in combat.”

The students broke up into squads and patrolled areas throughout the base, periodically stopping and setting up a secure position or practicing how to repel assaults from different

directions, and how to direct Marines to counterattack.

“We have a lot of instructors that came from an [infantry] occupation,” Baez-Colon said. “They’ll teach them from their own experiences as well because in the classroom we teach them by the book; but out here, we teach them how to apply those skills and whatever else we can teach them to be more effective and efficient.”

Hidden simulated improvised explosive devices awaited some of the patrols, a few cleverly hidden toward the end of the patrol.

“We’ll put them toward the end because just like when you’re in Iraq, you should never get comfortable, especially when they put a lot of IEDs on the roads back to base,” Baez-Colon explained.

Some of the students felt most of the subjects clarified their understanding considerably and thought the focus of the course was taught



Marines ready their gear after a quick chow break. They completed the final exercise at Corporals Course 4-08, the Warfighter Package, which applies all classroom lessons in practical application training.

with practical application in mind.

“I’m not a grunt,” said Cpl. Juan Gonzalez, motor transport operator, Combat Service Support Group 3. “So these guys helped us out a lot, especially with all the stuff infantry does. They taught us what to do if you have contact or how to react to IEDs. It really helped when they had all the scenarios, guiding us through, and making sure we understood what and why we were doing it.”

With the graduation Friday, the instructors were proud of the progress most of the Marines made and were ready to graduate their students.

“We taught them a lot,” said Sgt. Ronald Camacho, instructor, SNCOA. “They learned how to set up security, how to take care of casualties and call a ‘medevac,’ ... they’re ready to graduate with a better, clearer, effective understanding of basic warfighting skills.”



Photos by Lance Cpl. Achilles Tsantarliotis

Marines set up security during a patrol Tuesday, near Landing Zone Boondocker. Corporals Course emphasizes basic warfighting and teaches offensive and defensive maneuvers, reacting to IEDs and patrolling.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff visits troops



Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, presents a challenge coin to Sgt. James McKinney, inspection technician, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 24, after answering a few question from service members at Hickam Air Force Base's Officers' Club Feb. 20.

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

HICKAM AIR FORCE BASE, Hawaii — Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited service members at the Officers' Club here Feb. 20, to discuss current military operations.

Mullen focused on three factors pertaining to service members, and believes that although the war is in its sixth year, it's only the beginning of a long war where all branches of the military will go through a sustained effort to see it to the end.

"I want to thank all of you for your service," Mullen said. "I think this will be a long war, but I also think this is the best military this country ever had. Most of you all raised your right hand and swore in to the service during a critical period in our nation's history."

Mullen also commented about the families of service members and the support they've shown for their spouses.

"Family members have shown considerable support for their loved ones in this war," Mullen said. "The war has been going on for a while, but we wouldn't have been able to make it this far without your support."

The second subject Mullen spoke about was the change in today's society, and how technology has changed during the years. He spoke about how the enemy is quick, adaptive, and lethal, and how the military has to be faster in adapting.

"We live in a time of tremendous change," Mullen said. "This is an uncertain and unpredictable time where we are constantly learning and updating our [tactics, techniques and procedures]."

Mullen also spoke about the deployment-to-downtime ratio troops receive. Currently, the ratio is one tour deployed to one tour of rest. During that downtime, troops are gearing down from their previous deployment and gearing up for their next one.

"I don't expect us to be slowing down deployments anytime soon, but all of us are concerned about the continued pressure these deployments are having on the ground units," Mullen said. "Being focused on balancing legislation with deployments is one of my priorities, and eventually, I hope deployments go down to a two-to-one ratio where it is one deployment to two periods of rest. One thing we are trying to do is bring stability and predictability to

the lives of those deployed."

The last thing Mullen talked about were military leaders and how there's no better solution to difficult problems. He also stated how everything depends on great leadership.

"Everybody here is a responsible leader," Mullen said. "Whether you are a sergeant or a private, you are a leader to somebody, and it is my expectation to all of you to lead and lead well. Whether you lead from the front, the rear, in your service or just to your peers, lead them."

After Mullen finished, he held a brief question and answer period. He answered questions about deployments, equipment issues and politics.

"Whomever the new president will be, I will continue to give the best advice I can to them," Mullen said. "We continue to make progress in Iraq, but it's a delicate balance."

After hearing Mullen speak about current issues, service members felt great about his visit.

"I think it's great he visited here," said Sgt. Daniel Barron, aviation support specialist, Marine Aircraft Group 24. "It shows the troops that the higher ups are thinking about them and not leaving them in the dark."

Saving, investing tax refund could pay off

Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist

Smart money management does a wealth of good to anyone who qualifies for a tax refund this year.

More than 12 million U.S. taxpayers are expecting refunds according to the Internal Revenue Service's 2007 statistics report. Resisting impulse buys from a refund can pay off for those who plan financial goals. Free financial advice is locally available for those who want to make the most of their refund.

"It depends on the individual," said Eric Anderson, Kailua branch head, Navy Federal Credit Union. "There are several factors people should use to see if they want to save or invest. If they have loans or high debt, it may be good for them to pay off the amount."

People should look for purchases with durable benefits, Anderson said. Home repairs, retirement savings and higher education are several areas he said people could expect long-term profits. Rushing to buy expensive, quick consumables made life difficult for Jim Gardner, readiness and community support services manager, Marine Corps Community Services.

"When I was 21, I received a large return while I was still an airman,"

said Gardner, who runs MCCS's Personal Financial Management Program. "I had a \$7,000 tax return, and I bought a used '69 Pontiac Mustang. I was happy for about two weeks, until the thing fell apart."

The former airmen paid \$5,300 for the car without a warranty, and he spent the rest of his refund on costly repairs. Gardner said he still wishes he better managed his refund by taking the time to plan. When service members seek out Gardner's financial advice, he said it's helpful to treat a refund the same as other income.

Both Anderson and Gardner agree there are a variety of saving and investment options for tax refunds. The Kailua branch head said his credit union offers investment help for all ages, and creating long-term financial portfolios doesn't need to be stressful.

"For those who don't have any debt, they may want to consider certificates," Anderson said. "They're fairly reliable and easy for beginners to understand. However, it's important for people to know there's no one best solution for each person."

Gardner offers service members and families help in constructing a budget and finding ways to minimize expenses. He said he schedules additional sessions to see if a budget works or if a client needs a new budget due to

finance changes. During monthly planning, he suggests spouses keep each other informed and make collective decisions even if they maintain separate accounts. Items, such as computers, may have an impact on a couple's savings.

"There are those who make smaller purchases with their refunds for things like computers," Anderson said. "Everyone has different investment and savings needs. I think it's always important to evaluate your purchase and determine how much you really need it. With electronics especially, you need to consider the shelf life of the item."

Both said it's a good general rule to set aside 10 percent of income for savings before paying off monthly expenses. Those who save regularly during the year may consider taking a tax refund's fixed amount to invest in future purchases that could be expensive.

"My wife and I are planning a trip around the equator," Gardner said. "We're already working out a payment plan for a vacation in 2010. It's our dream vacation to have a cruise tour."

To schedule a free Personal Financial Management Program session, call 257-7790. For more information about potential tax refunds log on to <http://www.irs.gov/>.

Money Talks

Having specific financial goals helps people better plan their future, according to the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission's Web site.

The commission also suggests consumers create a timetable for themselves. Finding money to save or invest is easier when tracking monthly income and expenses:

- Income:
- Investment fees:
- Rent or mortgage costs:
- Utilities:
- Food:
- Transportation costs:
- Loans:
- Insurance:
- Education costs:
- Recreation:
- Health care:
- Gifts:
- Other:

For more advice about saving, call the Personal Financial Management Program at 257-7790.

To find out about investing, log on to: <http://www.sec.gov/investor/pubs/roadmap.htm>.

CMC steps on battlefield, surveys progress



Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James T. Conway linked up with Marines from Personal Security Detachment, Regimental Combat Team 1, for a visit to the city of Karma's Joint Security Station, Feb. 19.

Conway met with Marines from 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, who live and work at the station, and explained to them the importance of their mission and then opened the floor to questions.

After meeting with the Marines and Iraqi Police, Conway toured the streets of Karma and observed the local market filled with shoppers and vendors carrying on with normal day-to-day activities. The tour offered the chance for Conway to see first-hand the progress the region has made towards stability; a feat that is owed to the efforts of both Marines from 3/3 and the local Iraqi Police force.

The PSD returned Conway to Camp Fallujah where he posed for a few quick photos and then presented each Marine in the detachment a coin.



Chief Petty Officer 2nd Class Adam Mitchell, hospital corpsman, Marine Aircraft Group 24, shows how to swab for DNA when donating to the bone marrow registry. The Department of Defense Bone Marrow Donor Program is sponsoring several registry drives, including one March 15 at Mokapu Mall from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.



Chief Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Vandervis, hospital corpsman, MAG-24, reads instructions on how to collect bone marrow donor samples. Doctors test donor swabs for 12 genetic markers that match transplant patients. The Department of Defense is the largest contributor to the national marrow registry.

Bone marrow drive seeks to save lives

Christine Cabalo
Photojournalist

A simple swab to the cheek could save one of more than 6,000 patients who need a bone marrow transplant. The Department of Defense seeks volunteers for the Bone Marrow Donor Program's registry drive March 15 at Mokapu Mall from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Several units will also hold drives during the week. Potential donors can sign up on site or take home a kit to turn in later. "It's a really easy process," said Dan Dufrene, health promotion coordinator, Marine Corps Community Services. "I think not as many people donate to the registry because of misinformation. Some are worried its painful or think they're disqualified because they've been turned down as blood donors."

Dufrene, one of several registry drive coordinators, said no blood is taken during the new screening process. Doctors test collected cotton swabs for DNA, searching for 12 genetic markers that match a patient. Anyone may register unless they have active cancer, HIV or AIDS. Finding a match is rare, he said, and it may take as many as 300 people to register before a patient finds a suitable donor. Some patients die before finding a donor, like the mother of former Marine J.P. Otomo, who works as a simulation analyst with 3rd Marine Regiment. His mother died July 2005, after being diagnosed with leukemia a year and a half earlier. "I have to kick myself now because I wasn't tested to see if I was a match," the former Marine said. "At the time, I was told not to worry about it because it seemed like a slim chance

I'd be a match. There would have been a better chance with my mother's sisters, but none of them matched. It's something I still wonder about — would I have been a match?" Without a bone marrow transplant, Otomo said his mother used another type of stem cell therapy that worked for just a few months before her death. After reading an e-mail from program coordinators asking for assistance, he decided to register and volunteer. Roughly 8 percent of patients are DoD employees or their relatives, said Chief Petty Officer Victor Flores, hospital corpsman, Marine Aircraft Group 24. Flores, who will help collect and send donor swabs for testing, said the DoD is the biggest contributor to the national registry. If sick service members or their relatives find a match, the department pays for all costs of

the transplant. The hospital corpsman said the actual transplant doesn't hurt much, and others who experienced pain may have opted to proceed without painkillers to keep costs low. "About 60 percent of the time if you are selected to be a donor, you'll go through apheresis," Flores said. "Doctors will use a needle to take out white blood cells and put back the donor's red blood cells." Donors may also give their bone marrow through the older process of needle aspiration biopsy, where doctors take a sample through the hipbone. The program coordinator said both methods extract pure immune cells that can fight various blood diseases and cancers. Flores, who worked previously at National Naval Medical Center's oncology ward in Bethesda, Md., said he hopes the drive brings out 1,000 people to register.

"The new collection method is great because it's less invasive and it's easier for us," he said. "We can hold samples longer, and now anyone can volunteer to collect them." As a volunteer, Otomo said he realizes how anyone at any time can be diagnosed with a disease requiring a transplant. He said he hopes his work will help spare someone else from suffering, and the simulation analyst said he knows patients need transplants as soon as possible. "My mom was the healthiest person I knew," Otomo said. "She had a good diet and always exercised. When she got sick and the need for a bone marrow donor happened, it came out of left field." For more information about registry drives or to volunteer, call the Health Promotion Coordinator's office at 254-7636.

IPAC honors local Marine at K-Bay Officers' Club

Lance Cpl. Brian A. Marion
Combat Correspondent

Thousands of Marines have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi and Enduring Freedom, with heroes like Cpl. Jason L. Duhnam and Sgt. Rafael Peralta giving the ultimate sacrifice to save men under their command. But those who return are also heroes. They've fought and seen things most people wouldn't want to. Hundreds of these Marines walk the streets here each day, going about their business and doing their jobs. But what about honoring them? What about telling them they're appreciated? On Feb. 21, the Inbound Personnel Administration Center honored Sgt. Adam Morrison, rifleman, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, one of today's heroes at their first IPAC mess night in the Officers' Club here. "The mess night is about

honoring each other, ourselves, the past and present, our achievements and our Corps," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Timothy Cortes, staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge, IPAC. "Today we are honoring one of today's heroes. He has served two tours in Iraq and one in Afghanistan. We really want to honor him on this day, and we want to give our Marines a glimpse of customers they serve." Morrison joined the Corps in 2003 and went through boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, and went to the School of Infantry at Camp Pendleton, Calif. He then received orders to 1/3 and deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Morrison participated in Operations Phantom Fury and al Fajar in Fallujah, where he received gunshot wounds and shrapnel from a grenade. "We are honored to honor him," Cortes said. "He was in the same room as Sgt. Peralta when he dove onto the

grenade to save his squad." In December 2005, Morrison deployed to Afghanistan. While participating in Operation Mountain Lion, his patrol came under heavy fire from two machine gun positions along with multiple rocket propelled grenades. During the attack, Morrison directed his M-249 squad automatic weapon gunners into firing position, gaining fire superiority and suppressing enemy machine guns. "[Morrison] is one of the most motivating sergeants I've ever seen," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Nicholas Bartlone, deputy director, IPAC. "He was a leader in combat three times, and he saved his entire unit from receiving more fire in one of them. He is an outstanding Marine." Morrison, on the other hand, was impressed with the way they treated him throughout the entire process. "IPAC has been great through the entire process,"



Sergeant Adam Morrison, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, holds a statue presented to him by Master Gunnery Sgt. Timothy Cortes, staff non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Inbound Personnel Administration Center, left, and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Nicholas Bartlone, deputy director, during IPAC's first mess night at the Officers' Club here Feb. 21.

Morrison said. "They were completely awesome leading up to today. Whenever they picked me up or anything, they were in [the dress blues "D" uniform], and they did a great job on everything. Most units really don't recognize them, but it's nice to remem-

ber that we really can't do anything without them. I'm moving next week, and I can think of no other way to leave a unit or base than being honored." Through honoring Morrison, the leaders at IPAC hope to enlighten their Marines about

their customers. "We want them to better understand the kinds of people they are supporting," Bartlone said. "Some of their customers are heroes, and that there are a lot of everyday heroes right on this base."

STREETS, from A-1

could do to help them because there aren’t a lot of schools around here.”

While walking down the streets, the Marines who deployed to the al Anbar province last year noticed something different this time around.

“Our last deployment was a lot more kinetic,” said Lance Cpl. Brendan Houlahan, 1st team leader, 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Echo Company, 2/3. “Last year, every time we left the wire it was almost guaranteed that we were going to get shot at or have an (improvised explosive device) go off. It’s almost like we have to change gears from last year, but we just can’t get complacent. We still have to be on our toes and be on the lookout because there are still some bad people out there.”

Lembke shared similar thoughts about this deployment to Iraq compared to his last.

“The last deployment was a kinetic fight where something was happening constantly,” he said. “Here it almost seems like we’re on a peace-keeping operation. The area seems to be at the point where it’s starting to rebuild. This country, especially the Anbar area, has made some great leaps and bounds. But there are still some bad guys out there, and that’s what we’re here for, to get them and protect the rest of the population.”

Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans feel the area has calmed down, and the Marines are eager to help rebuild the nation.

“This is a good experience,” said Lance Cpl. Ronald H. Enos, squad automatic weapon gunner, 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Echo Company, 2/3. “This is why I became a grunt ... to travel around the world and help protect people.”



Cpl. Chadwick deBree

Marines and Sailors of 2nd Squad, 2nd Platoon, Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, Regimental Combat Team 1, patrol through the streets of Karma, Iraq, Feb. 21. The Marines patrolled the city to introduce themselves to local civilians and get to know the area better.

“They told us it would be a lot different from what they experienced,” the 20-year-old native of Sacaton, Ariz., continued to say about Iraq. “It may be different from what the other guys experienced, but I’m still going to go out there on patrol and keep an eye out

for my fellow Marines.”

Houlahan, a 20-year-old native of Monroe, N.Y., said that the new Marines are doing very well for their first deployment.

“They’re doing the best they can and really stepping up to do their job,” he said. “They’re evolving into

great Marines and it has a lot to do with the training and leadership they’ve experienced.”

Lembke also praised how well his Marines are handling their first combat deployment.

“For those of us who have deployed here before it’s just a new

[area of operations],” Lembke said. “They’re really using the training that they received and are getting better. Everyone is acting real professional while they’re outside the wire and while interacting with the Iraqi civilians, which is exactly what the Marine Corps wants them to do.”

RETURN, from A-1

readiness. They also supported a practice compliant boarding of USNS Stockham by the Reuben James.

A scenic trip home included three port stops to remote island nations, including Honiara (Guadalcanal) in the Solomon Islands. Reuben James and the Body Snatchers returned safely to Pearl Harbor and Kaneohe Bay. Now at home, the pilots, air crewmen, and maintenance technicians of Det. 2 look forward to reuniting with family and friends, as well as sharing their experience and qualifications to prepare their EasyRider counterparts for future deployed operations.

WELCOME, from A-1

Bleidistel, assaultman, 3/3. “It was great to see my family. They came all the way from California to be here today.”

Homecomings take a multitude of individuals and much base support to make each ceremony special, Stroud said. Marine Corps Family Services, the Key Volunteer Network and MarForPac Band are just a portion of support the ceremonies receive.

“This was our second deployment,” said Stephanie Summers, Key Volunteer, 3/3. “Our son was two weeks old when my husband deployed last year, so it’ll be like holding him for the first time again,” Summers smiled.

Through the Key Volunteer Program, Summers and other wives of 3/3 helped support the Marines throughout their deployment in Iraq with care packages, letters and e-mails. KV also provided a network of support to the Marines’ wives back at home.

To thank their wives, the Marines sent home a video message during the holidays, thanking them for their continual support during their deployment.

“In short, your Marines and Sailors have accomplished an extremely tough mission in what has been one of the most dynamic and historically significant periods of this conflict,” said Lt. Col. Nathan Nastase, commanding officer, 3/3, in the last deployed newsletter. “You can be, as am I, justifiably proud of the accomplishments of America’s Battalion. You, our friends and loved ones, are part of those accomplishments. No victory has ever come without the unconditional support of the home front.”

VP-47 at work



Petty Officer 1st Class Meagan E. Klein

Chief Aviation Warfare Systems Operator Gary Phillips, assigned to Patrol Squadron 47, talks to his fellow crewmembers on a headset while operating a sensor on a P-3C aircraft.



AROUND THE CORPS

Inter-service e-mail lists available online this year

Lance Cpl. Austin Goacher

MCAS Miramar

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION MIRAMAR, Calif. — As the need for inter-service communication continues to increase due to joint task force assignments, the Department of Defense has taken steps to begin a DoD-wide joint enterprise directory.

The directory, found at <https://dod411.gds.disa.mil>, gives service members the opportunity to locate and communicate with troops within other branches of the military service via e-mail or phone.

The directory, run by the Defense Information Systems Agency, is slated for launch later this year and expected to be fully operational in 2010.

The site currently allows DoD employees, with common access cards, to search for the e-mail addresses of service members and civilians throughout the department.

The directory provides users the ability to find people throughout the DoD community, according to the global directory services Web site. It standardizes the format information is provided.

The directory will remain Web-based and won't merge with the global address list Marines currently have access to via Microsoft Outlook, explained Maj. Joseph Uchytíl, the head of the Identity Management Branch of Headquarters Marine Corps.

"If you want to look up a buddy in the Air Force, you'll have to go to the Web site and type in the required information," Uchytíl said. "The GAL will continue to be the authoritative source for Marine Corps personnel."

The DISA holds data from across the DoD, but the individual services and agencies are responsible for the accuracy of that data, Uchytíl explained.

"I'm looking forward to the directory becoming fully operational because I know a lot of people in other branches of the military," said Lance Cpl. James Jackson, an ordnanceman with Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 314, Marine Aircraft Group 11 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine

Aircraft Wing.

Following the completion of the directory, service members can look up phone numbers and ranks of all DoD personnel.

For more information about the directory visit <https://powhatan.iiie.disa.mil/gds/index.html> or reference Marine Administrative Message 093/08.



File photo



**IN YOUR LIFETIME, YOUR
ODDS OF MAKING A
HOLE-IN-ONE ARE 1 IN 12,000.
YOUR ODDS OF DEVELOPING
SKIN CANCER ARE 1 IN 5.**

More than 1 million Americans will be diagnosed with skin cancer this year.

"Do your skin a favor — wear a broad-spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher and my personal favorite, wear a wide-brimmed hat."

-Greg Norman

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